

# NEWS

**It's been a whirlwind. My first term as the Head of Department has coincided with the department's tenth anniversary, marked by two events: we hosted a party that brought us together with a conviviality that felt positively pre-pandemic and dancing late into the evening; we also launched an exhibition that showcased our extraordinary *Partnerships, Power, Potential*.**

This has had me reflecting on what an honour it is to play a role in continuing to build on the foundations laid by visionary founders Professor Nikolas Rose and Professor Bronwyn Parry, as well as our colleagues who have been here from the beginning and are still going strong, Professor Hanna Kienzler and Professor Carlo Caduff.

As we head into the department's second decade, we find ourselves in a post/pandemic world that is broadly more receptive to our argument that 'health is more than a medical matter.' Our challenge and our opportunity is to consolidate on our successes and build our social science research agenda toward a more just future.

Our students are a vital part of this, and we welcome our largest undergraduate cohort so far across our BA and BSc programmes, and strong postgraduate cohorts in Bioethics and the newly consolidated degree in Global Health, Social Justice & Public Policy.

We have also welcomed new academic colleagues. Two joined in August: Professor Laia Bécades, an expert on ethnic inequalities in health who will be leading on our collaborations with King's Health Partners and Population Health, and Professor Ben Geiger, an expert on disability and workplace benefits who is co-leading the Work, Welfare Reform and Mental Health Programme within the Centre for Society & Mental Health. Dr Rishita Nandagiri joined as a lecturer in September, bringing a vital research agenda on abortion and reproductive justice in the global south and will be directing the Bioethics programme.

Dr Rosie Mayston has been a longtime affiliate who officially joined the department as a lecturer from across the river in November, and we are glad that GHSM will be her full-time home as she continues her research on mental health among older people in low- and middle-income countries.

We bid bittersweet farewells to treasured professional services staff including Tim Rogers, Undergraduate Senior Programmes Officer, and Emmanuelle Ngwanvah-Babirng Gold, Senior Business Support Officer. We wish them well in their promotions in Geography and FoLSM, respectively, and look forward to working with new colleagues in those roles, Madeleine Lott and Izzy Body.

We have also had the privilege to welcome an extraordinary visiting professor for the 2022-2023 academic year, Leverhulme Visiting Professor Camara Jones. An epidemiologist and physician who has been an agenda-setting leader in the area of anti-racism and health previously at the US Centers for Disease Control and as Past President of the American Public Health Association, she is spending the year building connections and capacity across the department, King's and beyond.



**Professor Anne Pollock** Head of Department

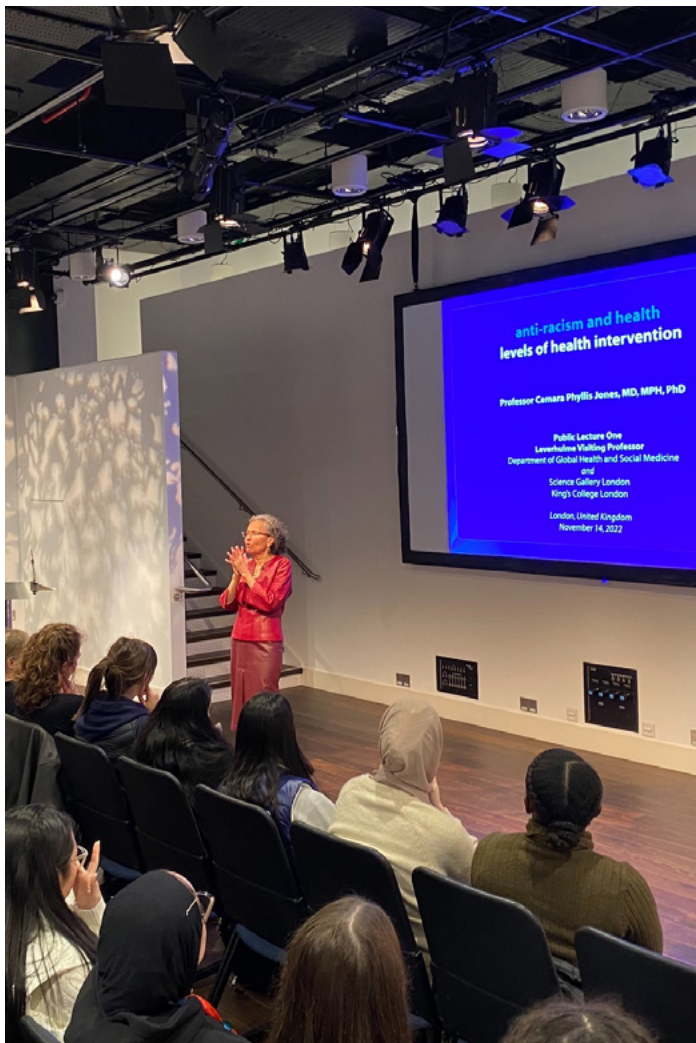
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## Hanna Kienzler joins the Commission on the Integration of Refugees

Professor Hanna Kienzler has joined the Commission on the Integration of Refugees as Steering Group member and commissioner. It is an independent commission that aims to improve the refugee and asylum system, for a society where everyone, including refugees, feels welcome and integrated. It will bring together diverse views and experiences from across the UK – from refugees and local communities, faith and community leaders, security forces and healthcare professionals – and will work to overcome differences and find common ground to fix the broken system with practical solutions. To find out more, visit [refugeeintegrationuk.com](https://refugeeintegrationuk.com) or follow @CIRefugeesUK on Twitter.



## Professor Camara Jones' first public lecture as part of her Leverhulme Visiting Professorship

**Professor Camara Phyllis Jones, MD, MPH, PhD joined the department in July 2022 as a Leverhulme Visiting Professor to build capacity across disciplines in and out of King's on racism and health in the UK.**

In the coming year, Professor Jones will be hosting masterclasses and other public lectures and events across the department and the university. In spring 2023, we can also look forward to a public conversation between Professor Jones and Professor Sir Michael Marmot. The lecture will be held on 7 March from 18.30 at Guy's Campus. More details to come! ■

## Poetry of sanctuary: Searching for safety, belonging and home

**As part of ESRC Festival of Social Science, the Refugee Mental Health and Place Network organised an event, *Poetry of sanctuary: Searching for safety, belonging and home*.**

The event, hosted by Drs Guntars Ermansons and Sohail Jannesari, took place on 1 November 2022 and featured poetry readings by refugee poets Bose, Maral and Habib, as well as digital photography exhibition with commentary by Ravi.

Harnessing the power of poetic expression, poetry readings and digital photography, the exhibition made explicit the harsh realities of migrant detention centres, exhausting asylum processes, existential suffering on the verge of life, and the power of inner resilience and support networks to shift direction of postmigration trajectories. It also explored intersections between public representation, experience-based knowledge and participatory research in refugee mental health ■





# GHSM pilots new course on decolonising research methods in global health and social medicine



**Held in June 2022, this event was a positive step towards meeting the department's objective to support the decolonisation of public health, medicine and global health – and higher education participants actively explored the limitations of current practices and learnt about indigenous methods of understanding the world.**

**I**t was delivered by experts applying a decolonisation lens to qualitative and quantitative research case studies. This includes epistemology of health, ethics in research practices, reflective practices and lessons learnt from indigenous research. Experts on the course included:

- Dr Johanna Keikelame, discussing the importance of acknowledging shifting power dynamics when conducting research, where participants have more power than the researcher.
- Dr Sohail Jannesari, discussing the need to centre ethics around community committees and building power outside university institutions.
- Dr Gonzalo Basile, discussing the importance of recognising knowledge generated from the Global South and creating South-to-South epistemologies.

- Dr Kaaren Mathias, discussing how data tells a story but never the whole story of the researched person.
- Dr Weaam Hammoudeh, discussing mental health in war-affected settings and how things could improve if we recognise the structural inequalities and injustices that cause people's mental ill health.
- Dr Jason Ardav, discussing the limitations of 'collaborative research' that are usually situated around economic differences.
- Dr Bitta Wigginton and Francis Nona, discussing settler colonialism.
- Dr Nancy Carajal, discussing how our actions, discourses and behaviours impact others' lives.

It was led by Dr Nancy Tamimi and coordinated by research assistants, Hala Khalawi (MSc, Birzeit University in occupied Palestinian territory) and Omar Gabriel Torres Valencia (MD, MSc, King's College London) ■



## War and COVID-19: discussing the case of Syria

**Dr Tareq Layka (Doctor of Dental Surgery and a master's student in Global Health, Social Justice and Public Policy) gave a lecture at the Global Health Summer School by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) Germany and Charité at Universitätsmedizin Berlin.**

**T**he lecture on 21 July 2022 was titled *Between global politics and local response: The case of Covid-19 in Syria* and explored the health implications of the global political atmosphere regarding Syria, a country that has experienced devastating conflict for more than 11 years.

In particular, the lecture investigated the connection between international sanctions coupled with a deteriorated economy and the COVID-19 response in the country, such as in vaccine procurement and logistics.

Additionally, through clinical interactions and observations, the lecture discussed the community's response to the pandemic and commitment to public health guidelines, which have been impacted by the prolonged period of war and instability. The lecture also covered the challenges facing conducting accurate, large-scale research projects across Syria in health and other fields of study and the technical difficulties related to data collection, among others ■



## Infant mental health from a global social medicine perspective

On 28 July 2022 Drs Michelle Pentecost and Anusha Lachman, joint funded by the Erasmus fund and the GHSM Mental Health and Society Research Group, led a two-hour workshop on *Infant Mental Health from a global social medicine perspective for practitioners, including paediatric and psychiatry registrars, nurses, dieticians, occupational therapists and social scientists at the Stellenbosch University campus, South Africa.*

Dr Lachman was in residence at King's from April-June 2022, which allowed for planning of activities.

Dr Pentecost completed an Erasmus Staff Mobility Training exchange at Stellenbosch University in the last week of July 2022, which included a research showcase and networking opportunities, but also an impact event specifically for practitioners.

This event took place at Tygerberg medical campus and was attended by 52 practitioners from across the Western Cape health service. The focus of the workshop was to deliver practical information for clinicians related to screening of infant mental health in community settings.

In addition to the interactive workshop, participants received flash-disks with educational materials to take back to their facilities, and the workshop also facilitated the distribution of 200 children's storybooks in a variety of South African languages (via [bookdash.co.za](http://bookdash.co.za), a not-for-profit distributor aimed at encouraging reading in young children), for use at facilities across the Western Cape ■

## Around GHSM



**Sophia McGully** (Bioethics & Society MSc, class of 2021) has been awarded a PhD place at the prestigious Centre for Reproductive Research, De Montfort University.

Sophia will be working with Dr Cathy Herbrand to investigate patients' perceptions and attitudes regarding fertility treatment add-ons and HFEA's traffic light system. Her PhD research builds directly on her MSc dissertation, for which she conducted a qualitative research project investigating experts' attitudes on HFEA's traffic light system.



**The Global Social Medicine Network contributes to the Social Medicine on Air podcast.** Led by Sebastian

Fonseca, Global Social Medicine network affiliate, the network has contributed to the delivery of 10 podcast episodes on a range of social medicine topics. Listen on [Spotify](https://open.spotify.com/).

**Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Directory for Refugees and Migrants in London**

The Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Directory for Refugees and Migrants in London has been recently updated. This is a free resource which provides valuable information about over 120 London-based organisations providing mental health and psychosocial support. It can be used by both refugees and migrants themselves, as well as by those who need to refer others to relevant mental health and psychosocial support services in and around London. You can download the Directory for free via the project [website](https://www.mhpss-directory.org/) ■



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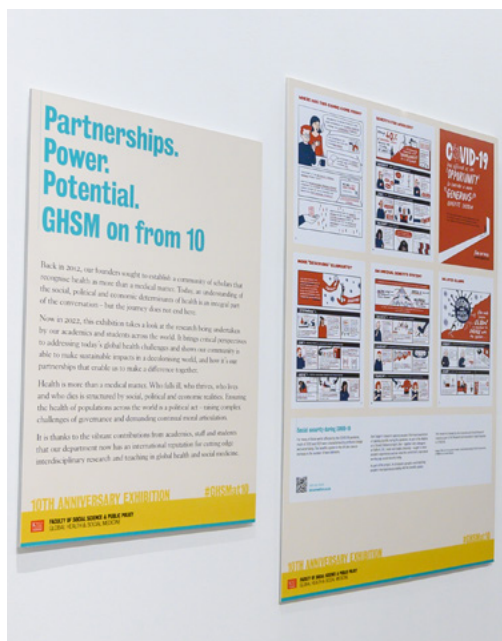
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## The importance of decolonising sexual reproductive healthcare

**Speaking on the WORLD: we got this podcast**, Annabel Sowemimo, PhD student shares with Dr Rishita Nandagiri about how she first got into sexual reproductive health, her role as a Community Sexual Reproductive Health Registrar and why she founded the Reproductive Justice Initiative.

She also talks about a piece called, ‘**The secret lives of Britain’s first Black physicians**’, which she wrote for Wellcome Collection and about her great, great grandfather – one of the first West African graduates of medicine in the UK. [Listen now](#) ■

# GHSM celebrates 10 years



**Back in 2012, our founders sought to establish a community of scholars committed to understanding health as more than a medical matter. Today, an understanding of the social, political and economic determinants of health is an integral part of the conversation – but the journey does not end here.**

In 2022, the department celebrated its growth and achievement through a series of events, among them an exhibition and launch. Titled, *Partnerships, Power, Potential: GHSM from 10*, the exhibition ran from 8–15 November at the Strand Campus and showcased the department's global reach, as well as the vital contributions made by our collaborators and partners. It included research projects being undertaken by academics and students in the UK, Chile, China, India and South Africa, among other places. Topics covered included ageing populations, mental health, reproductive health, COVID-19 and cancer care.

Speakers at the launch brought critical perspectives to addressing today's global health challenges, showing how our community is able to make sustainable impacts in a decolonising world and how it's our partnerships that enable us to make a difference together.

As part of the launch activities, alumnus Beauty Dhlamini spoke about what drew her to study the field and her thoughts on the challenges moving forward with Head of Department, Professor Anne Pollock.

Beauty spoke about the social determinants of health, including housing, climate change, working conditions and racial justice, and she encouraged a rethink of the categories associated with health and the need to spotlight just how much the social determinants of health determine an individual's experience of disease:

**'How we think about disease and the categorisations – I feel like they need to change or merge a bit more. And I say this because three years ago, if you had told me that we would be in a global pandemic with an infectious disease, I would have laughed at you and said, we've got rid of infectious disease – that's a thing of the past! And it wouldn't impact the world in such a way where it [impacts] working conditions, working patterns, how we think about vaccines and all of that stuff.'**

**Beauty Dhlamini**

Department founder Nikolas Rose spoke about the need for a department with an interdisciplinary and collaborative ethos in order to address structural inequality and structural violence. He praised the department for its ability to work within and between societies, notably between the Global North and the Global South. Professor Rose gave thanks to the undergraduates studying with the department in the early years.

**'There has been a lot of emphasis in global health on high tech inventions from the Global North, but we [as a department] think it's really important to work out and understand with partners on the ground how these things are actually developing, how they are experienced by people in local communities.'**

Professor Nikolas Rose, founder of the Department of Global Health & Social Medicine

Professor Anne Pollock reflected on the future of the department, and on the power and potential of understanding and addressing the social, political and economic determinants of health in today's society:

**'It was such a pleasure to be able to hear from our visionary founder Nikolas Rose, and to be in conversation with an extraordinary graduate of our undergraduate programme Beauty Dhlamini who is articulating an urgent future vision for our fields, and all in community with such supportive colleagues, students and friends of the department'.**

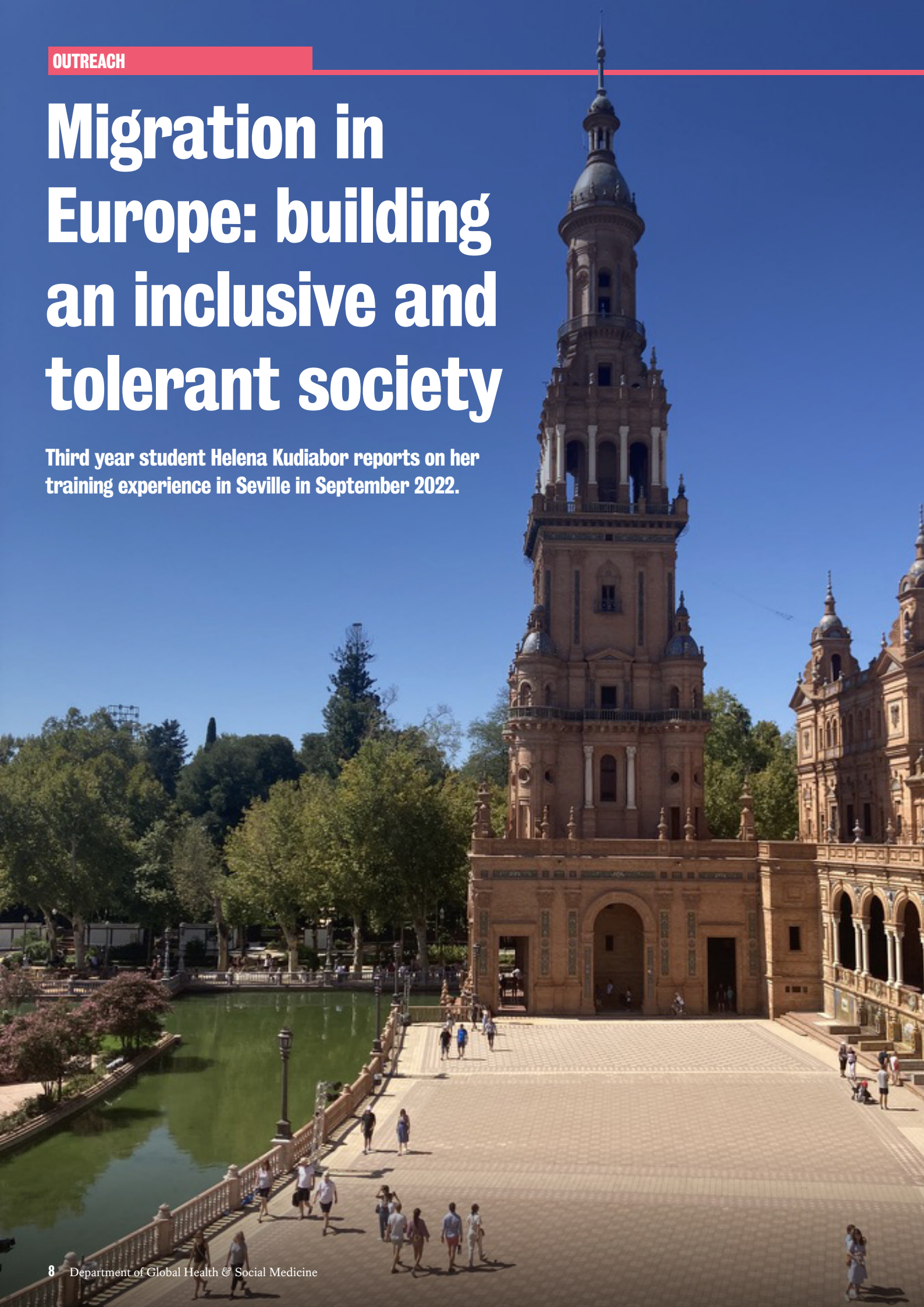
As part of the launch activities, GHSM also bade farewell to GHSM founding member Professor Bronwyn Parry. A party in her honour took place on 12 October and gave the department the opportunity to kick off the anniversary celebrations whilst also thanking Professor Parry for the immense contribution she has made to GHSM. She will be sorely missed but we look forward to frequent visits!

Find out more about the anniversary at [kcl.ac.uk/ghsm-at-10](https://kcl.ac.uk/ghsm-at-10) ■



# Migration in Europe: building an inclusive and tolerant society

Third year student Helena Kudiabor reports on her training experience in Seville in September 2022.







To allow people to gain a greater understanding of the refugee experience, Kairos Europe and Erasmus launched a series of educational programmes in countries across Europe. From 11–18 September 2022, I was fortunate enough to attend the programme in Seville, Spain.

Each day, myself and the other participants got the chance to hear from those working in Seville about their experiences working with refugees. We discussed important topics such as the conversion of work qualifications, the reception system for refugees in Spain, and the importance of adult education. We also got to listen to presentations about the importance of intercultural communication, empathy and bringing people together.

Via interactive exercises, we examined our own personalities and biases, and thought about how we can foster a more inclusive society. There was even a day trip organised to a local organic farm. While we were there, we heard about the environmental benefits of organic farming, and how the farm seeks to employ refugees and others who experience discrimination from society.

In addition to hearing from Sevillians, we also got the chance to hear from our fellow participants. One of my favourite things about the programme is that it brought together a range of people from different backgrounds, and the course provided a space for us to get to know each other and hear about other people's experiences. A number of participants chose to give presentations about their own connections to refugees. People discussed the volunteering work they'd done, their experience emigrating abroad, and even what it was like conducting news reporting in the field.

Mental health is a topic I'm particularly passionate about, so I chose to do my own presentation about the mental health of refugees. I talked about how the challenges refugees face can worsen their mental health, and how things like addressing social determinants and integrating mental health support with immigration services can help improve refugee mental health as a whole. I also got the chance to discuss the mental health work I've done as a Positive Peers co-supervisor, and shared how even non-professionals can support refugees by volunteering, donating and challenging stereotypes.

With class from 09.00–14.00, we had the afternoons and evenings to explore Seville. On our first day we were taken on a walking tour across the city, where we learnt about the culture and history of Seville, as well as seeing some key landmarks. Some highlights include: attending a captivating flamenco performance, visiting Plaza De Espana (Spain Square), visiting the breathtaking Royal Alcázar (an ancient royal palace), and enjoying lots of tapas! To make the trip accessible to everyone, flights, accommodation and spending money were all covered, meaning no one was held back from the trip due to finances.

My trip to Seville was an incredibly fulfilling experience. I got the chance to get to know many amazing people, and learn from people working first-hand with refugees. In times when it's so easy to feel pessimistic about the future, I left with a feeling of hope that we can work together and build a more inclusive, supportive society ■

# Dr Rishita Nandagiri

## Lecturer in Global Health & Social Medicine and Programme Director, Bioethics & Society MSc



### *What's your academic background?*

I describe my research as drawing on global health, gender studies and international development and anthropology (amongst others), rather than align myself with a specific discipline. I've since claimed 'refusing to be disciplined' as an academic descriptor! Part of this is that my academic trajectory isn't linear: I did my undergrad in English Literature & Development Communication and then an MA in Peace & Conflict Studies. I worked with feminist collectives and non-profits on reproductive rights and justice before doing my PhD in Social Policy at the LSE. I held onto that interdisciplinarity for my three subsequent postdocs, which included working at LSE's Department of International Development as well as an ESRC postdoctoral fellowship in LSE's Department of Methodology, where I worked with a feminist abortion collective in India to co-produce comic books and videos for abortion advocacy.

### *What are you working on at the moment?*

I find collective writing very fulfilling and have ongoing collaborative projects. As part of a multidisciplinary team of researchers and activists, I'm working on a mixed-methods study on the impact of COVID-19 on abortion. I also have a productive partnership with Dr Lucia Berro Pizzarossa – we're 'Lucita Nandarossa' – and are finishing another piece on self-managed abortion. I do have solo projects at different stages of completion – a methodological paper on secrecy and abortion and a grant application on abortion safety. I'm also finalising the outputs from my ESRC postdoc and hope to launch the comics and videos soon!

### *What are you most looking forward to in your new role?*

I've enjoyed meeting colleagues in person. I'll be chasing a few of you for that promised but elusive 'we should get lunch/coffee one day...' I'm also looking forward to getting to know and work with my students and tutees – it's one of the most rewarding parts of being an educator!

### *When you're not working, what do you like to do with your time?*

I like sports (I kickbox, have strong opinions about tennis), I like to cook (try this), I try to find time to read fiction (I co-run, with Joe Strong, an abortion book club) and I am definitely that 'I have a podcast recommendation' person! ■





# Laia Bécaries

## Professor of Social Science & Health

### *What's your academic background?*

I started my undergraduate studies in Classical Philology in Barcelona, but quit halfway through the first year and moved to the US to study Psychology. I was lucky that during the last year of my undergraduate degree a wonderful human – Castellano Turner – agreed to be my faculty advisor for the Senior Honors Program in Psychology, where I discovered my interest in research. After graduating I started working at the Institute on Urban Health Research, on projects that examined racial and ethnic inequities in outcomes for women who were receiving treatment for drug abuse. While working I did a master's degree in Public Health at Boston University School of Public Health, which back then offered a specialisation in 'Social and Behavioral Sciences'. The summer after graduating I moved to London to do my PhD in Social Epidemiology at UCL, where I was fortunate to be mentored by James Nazroo and Mai Stafford with whom I still work closely today. I then moved to Manchester where I received further formal training in quantitative methods at CCSR (now CMI), and informal training in table football at The Peveril of the Peak.

### *What are you working on at the moment?*

I lead a three-year project funded by the Nuffield Foundation that examines ethnic inequalities in later life. We have received a one-year extension to estimate ethnic inequalities in mortality, in collaboration with ONS. I also lead a project funded by the Health Foundation that studies ethnic inequalities in healthcare for people with multimorbidity. I am a member of the ESRC Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE), and as part of my work with CoDE I lead the Health workpackage, where we use large-scale datasets to understand ethnic inequities in COVID-19 outcomes, centering racism as the root cause of health and social inequities.

As part of my involvement in CoDE I also work on the EVENS survey, which includes a lifecourse measure of racial discrimination that I developed with colleagues in the US, UK and New Zealand. We are now in the process of analysing EVENS data and writing outputs, including an edited book that will be published by Policy Press in 2023. With my colleague Dylan Kneale I work on the Queerantime study, an unfunded project that documents the unequal impact of the pandemic on LGBTQ+ people. We've collaborated with the LGBT Foundation to disseminate findings to policy audiences, and were shortlisted last year for a THE award (didn't win, but were the last ones standing on the dance floor at the ceremony).

### *What are you most looking forward to in your new role?*

I am already enjoying getting to know colleagues and students, and learning about the interdisciplinary research that takes place in GHSM. I am looking forward to casual conversations leading to new ideas and to new collaborations, both within GHSM and the wider King's community.

### *When you're not working, what do you like to do with your time?*

I am busy running after an active five-year-old. Any energy I have left I use it to care for and propagate plants ■

# Ben Geiger

## Professor of Social Science & Health



### *What's your academic background?*

I did a PhD in Social Policy at LSE (just over the road from King's!), before joining the brilliant but terribly-named School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research (SSPSSR) at the University of Kent. Joining GHSM is an exciting change – I'm going from being surrounded by policy experts (at Kent) to being surrounded by health experts (at GHSM)!

### *What are you working on at the moment?*

I'm focused on the work, welfare reform and mental health programme in the Centre for Society & Mental Health (which I co-lead with Karen Glaser) – this includes looking at how the changing nature of work has impacted mental health/inclusion, and a detailed report on mental health among benefit claimants.

I'm also really interested in Philosophy of Science, mostly because I worry whether I'm doing the right thing in my own academic practice. So next year I'm hoping to write up a paper on the need to do mixed-methods research to avoid wishful thinking (inspired by Helen Longino's ideas); and to work with experts by experience to critically examine the role of lived experience in research, and how to move beyond 'positivism by proxy'.

### *What are you most looking forward to in your new role?*

It's been such a welcoming place so far, I'm really looking forward to getting to know everyone. I also really want to consider disability and social policy more globally in future, so it's great to be in a globally-focused department and to learn from everyone here.

### *When you're not working, what do you like to do with your time?*

I have a three-year-old son (Finn), and playing with him takes up most of the rest of my time! But aside from that, I love playing tennis, and I'm trying to get back into playing music – my 40th birthday present (from my wife/family/myself) was a proper digital piano, which is a joy, even though I'm pretty terrible at it these days! ■



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